

**IN THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, in this application.

Claims 1-4 (canceled)

5. (currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid encoding a mutated HXT3 hexose transporter, which comprises a nucleotide sequence encoding an amino acid sequence ~~with one or more mutations in comparison with SEQ ID NO: 26~~ which is obtained or isolated from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a mutation at position Ile 209.

6. (currently amended) The nucleic acid according to claim 5, having a sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 28 or ~~or~~ [[,]] SEQ ID NO: 29 ~~or a functional homologue thereof.~~

7. (previously presented) Recombinant yeast cell transformed with a nucleic acid according to claim 5.

8. (withdrawn-currently amended) Process for obtaining a yeast cell with improved fructophilic properties wherein a yeast cell comprising a gene encoding an HXT3 transporter has been altered in such a way that the HXT3 transporter has an improved capacity to transport fructose, comprising the steps of:

- a. mutating the HXT3 gene which comprises a nucleotide sequence encoding an amino acid sequence, which is obtained or isolated from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a mutation at position Ile 209, and
- b. selecting the yeast cell with improved fructophilic properties.

9. (withdrawn) Yeast cell obtainable by the process according to claim 8.

10. (previously presented) Yeast cell according to claim 7, wherein the yeast is *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, *S. uvarum*, *S. bayanus*, *S. pastorianus* or *S. paradoxus*.

11. (withdrawn) A method of using a yeast cell according to claim 7, the method comprising: fermenting carbohydrates with the yeast cell.

Claims 12-13 (canceled)

14. (currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid encoding a mutated HXT3 hexose transporter with an improved capacity to transport ~~carbohydrates~~ fructose as compared to the capacity to transport fructose of a wild-type hexose transporter encoded by SEQ ID NO: 26, which nucleic acid comprises a nucleotide sequence encoding an amino acid sequence which is obtained or isolated from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a mutation at position Ile 209.

15. (currently amended) The nucleic acid according to claim 14, which comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 28 or SEQ ID NO: 29.

16. (currently amended) The nucleic acid according to claim 14, which encodes an amino acid sequence according to ~~selected from the group consisting of: a sequence derived from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a mutation at a position selected from the group consisting of Gln 206, Leu 207, Met 208, Ile 209, Thr 210, Leu 211 and Gly 212; or~~ SEQ ID NO: 27.

17. (currently amended) The nucleic acid according to claim 14, which encodes an amino acid sequence obtained or isolated ~~derived~~ from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a mutation at ~~[[a]] position selected from the group consisting of Gln 206, Leu 207, Met 208, Ile 209, Thr 210, Leu 211 and Gly 212,~~ and further comprising at least a mutation at a position selected from the group consisting of Met 324, Leu 388, Tyr 389, Ile 392, Glu 414, Gly 415, Ile 449, and Leu 471.

Claim 18 (canceled)

19. (currently amended) The nucleic acid according to claim 14, which encodes an amino acid sequence obtained or isolated ~~derived~~ from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a mutation at ~~[[a]]~~ position ~~selected from the group consisting of Gln 206, Leu 207, Met 208, Ile 209, Thr 210, Leu 211 and Gly 212,~~ and further comprising at least a mutation selected from the group consisting of Met 324 Ile, Leu 388 Met, Tyr 389 Trp, Ile 392 Val, Glu 414 Gln, Gly 415 Asn, Ile 449 Val, and Leu 471 Ile.

20. (new) The nucleic acid according to claim 5, which comprises a nucleotide sequence encoding an amino acid sequence which is obtained or isolated from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a conservative mutation at position Ile 209.

21. (new) The nucleic acid according to claim 5, which comprises a nucleotide sequence encoding an amino acid sequence which is obtained or isolated from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a mutation at position Ile 209 to Val 209.

22. (new) The nucleic acid according to claim 5, which comprises a nucleotide sequence encoding an amino acid sequence which is obtained or isolated from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a mutation at position Ile 209 and further comprising at least a mutation at a position selected from the group consisting of Met 324, Leu 388, Tyr 389, Ile 392, Glu 414, Gly 415, Ile 449, and Leu 471.

23. (new) The nucleic acid according to claim 5, which comprises a nucleotide sequence encoding an amino acid sequence which is obtained or isolated SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a mutation at position Ile 209 and further comprising at least a mutation selected from the group consisting of Met 324 Ile, Leu 388 Met, Tyr 389 Trp, Ile 392 Val, Glu 414 Gln, Gly 415 Asn, Ile 449 Val, and Leu 471 Ile.

24. (new) The nucleic acid according to claim 14, which encodes an amino acid sequence which is obtained or isolated from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least a conservative mutation at position Ile 209.

25. (new) The nucleic acid according to claim 14, which encodes an amino acid sequence which is obtained or isolated from SEQ ID NO: 26 and having at least the mutation Ile 209 Val.

26. (new) Recombinant yeast cell transformed with a nucleic acid according to claim 14.

27. (new) Recombinant yeast cell according to claim 26, wherein the yeast is *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, *S. uvarum*, *S. bayanus*, *S. pastorianus* or *S. paradoxus*.

28. (new) A method of using a yeast cell according to claim 26, the method comprising: fermenting carbohydrates with the yeast cell.